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ABSTRACT

This book examines how five schools in New York City have developed "authentic," performance-based assessments of students' learning, and how this work has interacted with and influenced the teaching and learning experiences students encounter in school. Authentic assessment attempts to take the measure of a child's real work over time and to embed that assessment in a powerful but familiar intellectual context comprehensible to the child. Case studies of two elementary and three secondary schools describe how the schools are using a number of different strategies for personalizing instruction, deepening students' engagement with subject matter, and assessing learning in rigorous and holistic ways. The case studies examine how authentic assessment supports changes in curriculum, teaching, and school organization. The cases document the changes in student work and learning that can accompany new approaches to assessment when these are embedded in a school-wide effort to create learner-centered education. The specific aim of the book is to offer a "school-eye-view" of authentic assessment and to capture the kinds of work students and schools engage in as they use teaching, learning, and assessment strategies that together support high levels of accomplishment on challenging "real world" tasks. (Contains 97 references.) (JB)